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received a present from his relatives without saying thank you: 'He doesn't thank because they are his own people. If it had been an outsider, he would have said: "Thank you, Sir", because it would have been from pity they gave to him. To one's own people one does not thank, not at all! You say that is good. That is all.'[1] Hence perhaps the widespread complaint of the European that the Bemba is ungrateful and that there is no proper term for 'Thank you' in his language. Also perhaps the frequent disappointment of the white man who has given some unusually valuable Christmas present to his servant only to find that the gift is often taken for granted as part of 'the latter's regular perquisites'.

From these facts it will be easy to see how the association between authority and the power to give, on which the political life of the tribe depends, is impressed in concrete fashion on the mind of the smallest child. But food is also something that has to be shared, and in this attitude the Bemba baby is definitely trained even in the first year. Children share from one dish and the mother or elder sister tears off for each a lump of porridge with a little drop of relish rolled inside. An unexpected present or find must be divided with any other babies sitting near. Any European food, such as an orange or a bit of bread, that I might happen to give away was torn into the tiniest fragments, and mothers who are such lax disciplinarians in other respects, speak quite sharply to their children on this one issue. I have seen a woman seize a lump of pumpkin out of a baby's hand and say in most vehement protest: 'You give some to your friend you child, you! You sit and eat alone! That is bad what you do.'

As the Bemba child grows older there is a third attitude he has to acquire, i.e. that food is something over which his older brothers and sisters have definite rights—not elders generally, but the seniors of his own family group. He is taught that they may pounce on any delicacy he may be eating. This I first noticed among groups of children in one village, mostly parties of brothers, sisters, and cross-cousins. An older boy would take without comment any orange or biscuit I might have given to a younger child. All boys between 10 and 15 regularly wait for the leavings of the young men's meals, and have no other portion allotted to them. I have

[1] *Tatota pantu ni mwana uabo. Nga ni umbi, aleti 'Ea Mukwai' pantu ni ku luse bamupela. Ku bantu babo teti atote nakarya! Ukuti asote 'Cawama', epela!*

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576 867 even seen a grown-up man seize a piece of fish from a small sister of 8, who expressed absolutely no surprise. An older girl will catch the wrist of a younger sister who has been given some snuff and scrape the precious powder out of the young girl's hand, leaving her only a little pinch for herself. The younger sister may make a face, but will not protest. In the same way I have seen a young husband call to his wife to throw him a lemon she had been given. She exclaimed: 'You crocodile you!' but threw him the fruit quite good-naturedly. Hence the rights of the elder or the headman or the Chief described in Chap. XIII, are based on beliefs very early inculcated, of what are a relative's dues. Here again the different attitude of European mothers is noticeable. In a society in which individual initiative is on the whole encouraged, and age has no particular prerogatives, we tend to see that the youngest child gets his fair share at the dinner table or in the nursery and often teach the elder children to 'Give it to Baby first'. The Bemba mother on the contrary always says: 'Let your elder brother (*umukalamba wobe*) have it! Give it to him first', and on this recognition of precedence the whole organization of daily life as well as the political system finally depends. Bemba children in fact do not seem to resent the rights of their elders, and I noticed that both little girls and boys often repeated the words *umukalamba wandi* ('my elder') in tones of great affection and pride. The con-
593 stant competition between the older and younger members of the family that is so pronounced in our society does not seem to exist.[1] We encourage our children to take a pride in their personal possessions, to handle them carefully, look after them, 'put them
[524] away'. Bemba children have no material possessions beyond the twig bow or the maize cob doll, but all the objects they use they are taught to yield up on demand from an elder. In adult life the
[431] man who gives presents to his elder brother, and still more the woman who honours her elder sister, is praised with particular enthusiasm.[2]

[1] Bemba brothers are not in competition with each other for the family inheritance as among the patrilineal cattle-owning people of South Africa. There is little material property to inherit, and in any case the boys marry early in life and hence join different economic and local groups.

[2] When I travelled with my older sister for some weeks in this area I noticed that whenever I carried something for her or gave her precedence, a delighted murmur went up from the watching women: 'She honours her *umukalamba*. Look, she is carrying it for the big one.' It meant conformance to their own code.

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impressed by their constant emphasis on the value of peaceful relationships, whether within the village, or the kinship group. They are afraid of the man or woman whose quick temper or sharp tongue makes them liable to take offence or give it. I have heard several men seeking wives in a strange village ask anxiously of their acquaintances there, 'Does she come of a quarrelsome family? Do they make offensive remarks?' (*Ikusose fibi.*) Neighbours with good reputations are those whose 'hearts do not get hot quick', and who tend to ignore insults—*ukusula*—a traditional cultural attitude by which a man can acquire kudos by voluntarily giving up his rights so as to avoid friction. This pattern of toleration is impressed on the Bemba from their earliest years. Parents who rebuke their children for little else are yet quite firm on this one point: no quarrels must be allowed. A sobbing child of six, about to punch a smaller boy who had knocked over his mud-pudding, was picked up sharply and told to repeat, 'The chief of another tribe may stay where he pleases' (*Mfumu shya bene baikalapo*), i.e. every one has a right to do as he pleases. Such incidents are quite common, and similar behaviour is noticeable as between children and adults. An elderly relative often shrugs his shoulders at a child's decision to do or not do something it is asked, and says (*Ni sunine*) 'He is the owner of the affair', i.e. the child must decide. The legal relations between one man and another are discussed with the same conscious effort at toleration. Certain obligations are fixed and definite, and acknowledged by the whole community, but there are a number of issues in which the rights of two individuals are not so clear, and a clash of personal interests seems to be threatened. In such cases the man of sense and good breeding does not try to define his claim. He avoids putting the matter to the test in the interests of peace.[1]

It is this anxiety to avoid friction which influences the people in their choice of land for cultivation. A chief may not care whether the villagers of one community cut gardens in the land bordering the huts of another, but the villagers themselves will be afraid to do so. They do not want to risk the anger of the neigh-

[1] There is also a supernatural sanction behind this pattern of human behaviour. The man who dies feeling injured, or with a sense that he has been denied his rightful dues, becomes a *icima*, or haunting spirit, avenging the wrongs he has suffered on the living. Hence the uneasy feeling of the Bemba when any one publically announces a grievance, or is known to have been wronged. Thus religious belief, norms of conduct, and the type of agricultural system practised, all combine to determine the legal rules for the use of land.

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881 868 that is recognized to be cumulative. A girl may have little intellectual understanding of what is being done at the time of her chisungu, although she may be in a highly emotional state in which she is likely to be suggestible to the general emphasis laid on the importance of marriage and childbirth. Next year however she will act as a young helper of the *nacimbusa* and so her knowledge will grow. As one old *nacimbusa* put it 'If she has seen two ceremonies, or three, a girl will come to me and say "Tell me about the crocodile". She remembers and then she comes and asks me again "Tell me some more about the crocodile" and I tell her more. But other girls have no ears. They do not ask anything. They just say "Let it be, those are things of the chisungu" '. In other words, clever girls begin to memorize and get more and more knowledge of the deeper associations of the symbols and these girls probably become specialist *banacimbusa* as they grow older. The others, no doubt, give up when they find they cannot master the intricacies of the ceremonial.[1]

881 867 543 Secondly the chisungu teaches, not the technical activities of the wife, mother and housewife, but the socially approved attitude towards them. The women themselves see this point and, in fact, made it to me. An intelligent *nacimbusa* will admit that the girls know how to cook and grind but will say that after her chisungu a young girl does her work in a different way. Such women explain that, when young, a girl can idle in the gardens if she likes and her mother will shrug her shoulders and say 'She is not grown up'; but when she is married, she cannot refuse her duties or it will be a cause of divorce. Husbands will scold a lazy wife and this will bring shame on her family. As one woman put it: 'Before, if they were called to work they could go slowly. Now they have to run.' In other words, the girl is told that she has to do things with a new spirit and a new sense of responsibility. The rite not only consecrates the woman's duties in the sense of making them seem honourable, but it is an occasion for the public affirmation of the legal obligations of the marriage. There are pottery emblems associated with most of the duties of bride and bride-

[1] The Kriges point out that a Lovedu girl is only considered properly initiated when she has witnessed the ceremonies six times. Cf. *The Realm of a Rain Queen*, 1943.

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groom in marriage. A glance at the list given in Appendix B will show that there are songs associated with the girl's duty to her husband and to her in-laws, with the correct behaviour of the mother towards her child and to the community of her fellow-women. Other songs and figurines are associated with the wife's domestic duties as a gardener or a cook. There are duties she assumed at marriage and as part of her marriage contract, and it will be remembered that during the last night of the ceremony the girl has to sing each song herself and handle the associated pottery *mbusa*. It seems likely therefore that these rites are the means by which the girl publicly accepts her new legal role. These are the obligations handed down to her. These are the *mbusa* which she is given at her ceremony and which her friends congratulate her on receiving. It must be remembered too that for the Bemba girl these marriage obligations are probably the first acts of individual responsibility she has been asked to undertake, a point to which I will return later.

There are, of course, other social obligations mimed in the chisungu ceremony, such as the proper submission of the girl to her husband; the distribution of food to the family; and the exchange of gifts. The relationship between brother and sister is depicted in the pottery image known by that name for example; there is also the squat and unattractive figure of the lazy wife. I think that these mummeries, to use the term employed by the Kriges in their description of Lovedu ceremonial, must be reckoned as rather different from the rites of role assumption mentioned above. The women were amused at seeing the images of the brother and sister but there was no insistence that the girl herself must handle these or herself sing the attached song.

It is difficult, and probably unnecessary, to draw hard and fast lines between mimetic rites designed to produce a result, and which can therefore be reckoned as magic behaviour; rites which represent behaviour associated with a social role; and rites by which the individual publicly proclaims that she is ready to accept a role which will afterwards be enforced by legal penalties. I use here the terms 'magic rites', 'representative rites' and 'rites of role assumption' because they seem to me to correspond to differences in the people's own attitude.